/245/

224 373 During low water they also go hunting at night, drifting slowly and without making any noise, while one of the Indians brings a torch of turí. They thus surprise the pacas, which are blinded by the light, and the Indian kills them with arrows. [177] Nowadays they use a battery flashlight for night hunting.

6) Agriculture.

241 The mandioca is what provides the principal food of the Indians of the basin of the Uaupés. All these tribes are thus found in the phase of tillage, which is practiced, however, in a very primitive manner: it is the phase of the "cavouco" /digging, pit, hollow/ or of the "cova" /hole/.

They freely choose the land that pleases them the most, because of the proximity of their dwelling and because of the guarantee against theft (75),

> 75. For this reason he will not do it at the edge of the river, unless it is beside his dwelling. If it is in the vicinity of the river, he will always leave a wedge of forest between the clearing and the river, in order to hide it from the view of those who are traveling on the water. And the landing place where he disembarks and ties his canoe will be at a certain distance from the clearing, in order not to reveal its location.

and which is a little sandy, as the "terras-firmes" of the entire region generally are, and suitable for mandioca. The act of • *[423] *[192] clearing, wexsé pá:kʉ̃rõ̃, is what gives them the ownership of the land while cultivating it.

[462] Clearing is done in the periods of less rain, that is, from June to August and from December to February. It is work exclusively for the men. They start by choosing an area con- *[192] venient as to distance and not subject to floods, with yellowish soil, semisandy, di'tá sõarã̃, or black and somewhat humous, nã̃xkã̃ di'tá ñyʉ̃rõ̃.

*192 241 313 [412] [177] /245 cont./

They "go around" the clearing (pũ-pé: it is the Tukano term that they use), that is, they mark off from the rest of the forest the area they want, with a small lane, cutting down the small plants and breaking branches. Formerly they did it only with the stone ax, õ̃xtã̄ komé; today clearing is done with the help of the machete, di-phĩ, and also at times with the iron ax, komé. The work consists essentially of breaking off the bushes and going around the large trunks with blows in such a way as to make the bark come off. With this the tree would dry and could then be burned. Once all the trees are dried in a more or less square area of about 50 or 100 meters on a side (according to the number of persons in the family), fire is set at various spots, and thus the gigantic trees either are incinerated or are reduced to a blackened trunk, which often falls to the ground. The clouds of smoke that rise here and there from the green /246/ forest reveal the places where a good burning, õ̃hõ̃ã̄-dyakã̄-siri, is taking place.

If the burning was not very successful, because the sticks were not dry or because of a lack of wind, the work is done again, taking down branches, assembling them around the trees -- this is called coivara, in Tukano doxté-peosé, and burning is done anew.

• [423] [476] Although the clearing is individual or, better, family property, for the work of clearing and burning the one interested will ask for the collaboration of his companions in the maloca or in the povoado; or, if he lives isolated, that of the closest inhabitants. And not only of his own tribe, but even of another nation. This collective work (cf. IX -- 2) is called neõsé (in Nheengatú ayurí). The immediate pay, that is, on the day or days of work, is a plentiful caxirí for all the workers; and more distantly his own help when solicited for identical work for the benefit of others. The ayurí is always practiced whenever the participation of many persons is needed for one job, for example, to cut and bring wood from the forest, to put in place the timberwork of a house roof, etc. The ayurí is a practice that is still in force even among the caboclos of the Rio Negro.

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of the pull of propinquity. The Cubeo welcome and respect neighborliness.

The river has its natural boundaries. These are the segments of river demarcated by rapids and by the tributaries or creeks. A boundary is from one such feature to the next, from a *cachoeira* (rapids) to a creek, from a creek to a creek, but rarely from *cachoeira* to *cachoeira*. A boundary defines only sib territory. There is no phratric territory as such. If there is phratric and tribal territoriality it is because each of the sibs undertakes to defend the principle in terms of its own interests. A sib may adopt a stranger and in this way incorporate it into the phratry. It needs no permission to do this. On the other hand, a sib may appeal to phratry mates for help in warding off by force unwanted intruders. Boundaries do not close a river to traffic. The river is always an open highway for travel, and travelers may fish and hunt along it freely. They may not put up fixed installations such as weirs or show other signs of residence such as fishing a particular spot with regularity without permission. Men regularly fish only within the sib limits. The discussion of boundaries, it should be explained, does not flow naturally from the Cubeo. It is drawn out by the ethnographer. The Cubeo are not jealous of boundaries and they rarely have issues over them, but they do know them. Occasionally someone violates the common law of courtesy of the use of fish weirs and keeps the barrier closed beyond the allowable period. The Cubeo cannot and do not attribute this unmannerly act to gluttony. Gluttony is an incomprehensible notion to them. They attribute it either kindly to forgetfulness, in which case there is no issue, or to unfriendliness, in which case there is a quarrel and an effort is made to tear down the barrier. On the forest side there are no boundaries at all except for the clearing itself. It is not land but river frontage that is valued.

CANOEING

So much of a man's time is spent in a canoe that no description of native life would be complete that did not relate the Indian to the river as a canoeman or that failed to bring out the motor rhythms of canoeing. Motor rhythms are patterned, the rhythm of paddling and the characteristic rhythms of the dance showing particularly striking parallels.

Paddling follows a definite though irregular rhythm. The prowsman on a long trip is keeper of the stroke. Paddling is noisy. On the downstroke the stem of the paddle just above the blade is struck

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Another and somewhat more restrictive form of collective fishing is with basket traps in conjunction with a weir. Some household head may have traditional rights to a *caño*, inherited from his father or uncle. He invites men of the sib to place their baskets at the *caño* when the fish are running, usually at the start of the dry season. All sibmen may share this privilege although the obligation to invite holds strictly only within the joint family of brothers. In any event, the catch from the basket traps is eventually shared among all households in the sib. [423] [428]

The technology of fishing is fairly complex, involving skills in making and in maintaining equipment and, of course, expert knowledge of fish and their habits. Nowadays all Indians use commercial fishhooks. All else is native. A father teaches his son by explaining, by showing, and primarily by allowing the boy to accompany him. The basic instruction is individual and direct. A boy who has no father learns from a paternal uncle or grandfather, but he will often not be as deft as one who has his own father as a teacher. An important supplementary mode of learning is within the play pack. Here, unsupervised by adults, the boys practice what they have learned from their fathers, listen to one another's criticisms, and exchange information. The laggard has a chance to catch up. [177] 226 868 [593]

Because the best fishing is during low water, great stress is laid upon skill in handling the fishing bow and arrow. Every boy toddler is provided by his father with a miniature bow and set of arrows and is set to practice at a fixed target on terra firma. Grown boys practice with adult equipment along the river bank, aiming, if they possibly can, for fish. A boy is always welcome to accompany his father as a companion on a fishing trip, but if he wishes to be a partner he must be reasonably adept. The Cubeo may treat some work as fun but they never confuse it with play. Needless to say, the boys attend very closely to the task of learning river skills. [224]

Every man makes his own equipment — a fishing canoe, line, fish net, basket traps, splint weirs, bow and arrows. There is some trade in these items, but no one is regarded as having reached adult status who is unable to equip himself with these necessities for fishing. Skill in making equipment is acquired by careful observation of others and by helping. As a boy reaches manhood he prepares his equipment, calling upon and freely receiving assistance from elders and from more deft age mates. Fishing lore is acquired gradually. [438]

The Cubeo say that all men are equally skilled at fishing, although to an outside observer differences seem obvious. Leadership in fishing is to them a matter of initiative and personality, not of skill. 226 554

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calabash dishes that had only just been acquired from the Karapana Indians was traded to the Desanas for a tray. The Cubeo seem to prefer the trade article to the domestic product. Finally, it should be said of intertribal trade that much of it follows the lines of intermarriages, in which objects are transferred in the course of normal affinal exchanges.

Within the tribe, objects tend to be exchanged largely in accordance with principles of kinship and blood brotherhood. However, as sibmen visit along the river they learn which objects and whose skills one may properly admire. The object is asked for, or in a sense contracted for, and a genial nonhaggling discussion settles the terms of the exchange. Apart from farinha, a special case, food rarely enters the channels of native trade. Koch-Grünberg's information that upriver people acquired manioc from the downriver *Hehénewa* does suggest trade in food. He gives no details, however (1909, II, 82). I never observed or heard of native trade in food, other than casual and small-scale exchange of secondary crops. Maize, for example, is a trade item, but then it is hardly a foodstuff on the Cuduiari.

PROPERTY

With respect to land it is dominion rather than ownership that we deal with. A tribe has dominion over a territory, a phratry over a river or over sections of a river, and a sib over a smaller segment of river frontage. Dominion is sanctioned by traditions of origin which narrate precisely where the first ancestors came from, and their subsequent travels and settlements. On the strength of these traditions people can say, "This is our land." A group that has been displaced from a traditional territory may adapt its traditions to new conditions, giving itself a new origin myth. But as long as the traditions hold, the claim to dominion over the territory is not surrendered. Place names are part of the traditional claim to a territory. They identify ancestral sites, and, more particularly, fishing sites, old orchards, and manioc plantations.

Since there is no tribal or phratric administrative organization, concepts of tribal or of phratric dominion are matters of general sentiment rather than of concrete claims. Only a sib is truly concerned with its territorial integrity. There is little cause for a sib to fear encroachment on its territory. There have been instances of one sib taking over the territory of another, but these instances, as the Cubeo interpret them, were of hostility against the people, not of desire for their land. I found no evidence of land hunger among the Cubeo.

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423 615 [578] [768] The phratry, with its extension of kinship along a large section of river, provides for amicable settlements of boundary disputes; these arise, however, over river use only, never over cultivated land. There is no thought more repugnant to the Cubeo than that one should cultivate land that has been cleared by another. When a woman dies her manioc plots are left to be grown over after the mature tubers have been harvested, so strongly do the people feel about the intimate relationship between land and its cultivator.

241 614 361 Within the sib territory, male household heads arrive at individual or, more often, joint decisions as to the total clearing and the allocation of household manioc plots within it. An individual may select any part of the sib territory for a clearing, although by tradition and for reasons of convenience the plots are contiguous and the clearing is one large space. Preparation of a clearing is most often a collective effort supervised by the headman. Even as they begin to prepare a clearing the household heads discuss their individual allocations and stake out a location. There are two ways in which the cultivation of a clearing can be organized. The preferred way is for the headman to organize a collective work party, including all household heads. If this cannot be arranged, either because of lack of agreement about a joint move or because some male household heads are away in the rubber forests or in some other work, the move is made gradually. Then the headman and his close associates are the first to move to the new location. They start the clearing by preparing their own plots, establishing a bridgehead, so to speak, for the rest of the sib. This method of moving over to a new location indicates how little anxiety the Cubeo feel about getting a choice location. When the later arrivals come they can count upon help from the headman and the earlier settlers in preparing their own clearings. The general clearing begins initially as a narrow semicircular band so that each plot is about the same distance from the house. The band is then widened by each household in accordance with its needs for new land. Annually, during the short dry seasons, a household head and the other adult males cut down and burn over the timber, outward from the *chagra*, to extend the cultivations. Manioc can be harvested at from six to 24 months. A providential family allocates one section of a field for a two-year harvest.

244 423 A manioc cultivation is always spoken of as belonging to a woman. A woman says, "This *chagra* was made for me by my husband" (or "my son" or "my brother"). She is the sole administrator of the plantation and may assign sections of it to her daughters, to her daughters-in-law, and to guests who have come for an extended visit. The

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The relation of the men to the manioc cultivations is as follows. By working jointly in making a clearing the men are fulfilling, in part, a sib obligation. This is of minor importance, however, as compared with the specific obligations and the ensuing relationship between a man and a woman. No bond between a man and a woman is of greater importance and richer in sentiment than that set up by the making and cultivating of a manioc garden. Every garden plot defines a relationship between a specific man and a specific woman. A woman without a man can have no garden. A man without a woman has no clearing to make; he can have subordinate status only in another household. Each side gains status from the arrangement. The only firm bond is that between husband and wife. A widow has only a frail claim upon the labor of her brother, whose primary obligation is to his own household, where his wife keeps jealous watch over her own *chagra*; for a woman's pride is deeply involved in the size of her manioc clearing. The Cubeo regard the size of clearing as a sign of a husband's affection for his wife. A widow has a better claim upon an unmarried son. As we shall see, between unmarried brother and unmarried sister a semiconjugal relationship develops over the material holding of land.

We have spoken of a reciprocity in status involved in the manioc *chagra*. There is also a specific and related economic reciprocity. By making a clearing a man obligates his wife's production. The preparation of manioc cake is never spoken of as a wifely obligation, but chicha and farinha are. The point of economic reciprocity as it sometimes emerges in the course of conjugal quarrels is entirely one of status and not of so fundamental an issue as food. If we are to speak of male-female reciprocity on matters of food the issue is between the male flesh foods and the female cultivated foods. Although a man obligates his wife's labor for chicha and for farinha he evidently does not obligate all of it, for a woman will suddenly declare that she is cosponsoring a drinking party by a contribution of "her" manioc. Moreover, it is part of the status of a wife that she can freely contract part of her farinha production for personal objects, such as cloth and trinkets. If there is a formal principle governing this kind of connubial economic arrangement I did not learn what it is.

The point to emphasize with respect to manioc cultivations, then, is that the issue in possession of land is not simply that of subsistence. It would be unthinkable for a Cubeo to allow a sibmate, or phratry mate for that matter, to hunger if he had any food for him. When a solitary woman laments that her *chagra* is exhausted and no kinsman is moving to make another for her, the fear she voices is not that she

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244 will lack food, but that she will lack a role in chicha preparation and
423 be deprived of trade goods. Her fear is for loss of status.

[261] The *chagra*, to summarize, is a well-defined item of property. It is
[602] the domain of a particular woman, in the sense of economics, in the
[558] sense of status, and, as mentioned earlier, as a kind of sanctuary. No other land in the community has this character of particularity. All other cultivations, including pupunha orchards, belong to the cultivator, but the land on which they are grown has no standing as personal property. Whereas the manioc gardens of a household have contiguity, to the point where a son clears a plot for his wife adjacent to that of his mother, the variety of its other cultivations are scattered over the entire settlement.

241 With respect to all secondary crops, there is also very clear recog-
423 nition of ownership. Each planting has its known owner, who may be a man, a woman, or a child. Ownership rights are scrupulously respected, and no one would consider disturbing another's plantings
[622] without permission. Tobacco, coca, and *mihi* are generally grown for
[431] the community by the headman, but are recognized, nevertheless, as his plantings. He also contributes to the community all of his pupunha harvest. But it is precisely because he contributes to the
[183] community that his ownership is clearly acknowledged. The point,
[431] of course, about Cubeo property relations is that generosity and sharing go along with the assertion of individual rights. The privilege of the individual as a *giver* is thereby respected. The least formal
249 sharing involves sugar cane. It is understood that everyone is entitled
423 to the simple refreshment of a freshly cut stalk of cane. Even so,
431 adults who do not have cane of their own prefer an invitation. Children, on the other hand, do not stand on ceremony. Yet even a very young tot who is cutting a stalk does so with the announcement, "I am now cutting the cane of my older brother," or whatever the kinship connection may be.

226 On the river, the masculine domain, the men have staked out sites
423 for placing weirs and fish traps. The setting of weirs is the one ter-
614 ritorial issue that disturbs the harmony between sibs along a river. Weirs are commonly set in a *caño*, in which case they are a purely intrasib matter. If, however, men block the main stream they are obligated to allow fish to pass through periodically. "Sometimes they
[578] forget," I was told, "and then we go and tell them. But if they are mean then we go at night and break up their weirs." Such disputes
423 are not common. Within the sib the issue is not of weir rights but of
226 specialization in fishing methods. A man develops a preference for weir fishing, he troubles to prepare the cumbersome equipment and

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use it, and, as the others do, he shares his catch with the community. Weir sites are inherited by a son so that there is some tendency for this specialty in fishing to descend in certain families and not in others.

In objects there are two main kinds of property rights, those of the community and those of the individual. Community rights are in all objects made for public use by the headman or his wife, such as a large canoe, great chicha urns, the manioc oven, the sugar cane press, and guest benches. Of a somewhat less public nature are ceremonial objects and musical instruments also made by the headman or by an aspirant to his office. The first group of objects are fully in the public domain and subject to constant use. The second group are in the possession of their maker and are brought out by him alone on the proper occasion. Full individual ownership resides in all other personal possessions: household utensils, canoes, weapons, trinkets and ornaments, all trade goods from Europeans, and items of clothing. Disposition of these objects is subject entirely to the discretion of the owner.

Infants also own property and their rights are more or less respected. Sometimes a planting is set in an infant's name by the parent or grandparent. A mother commonly dedicates a brood of chicks to her nursing child. The feeling is that, as with ornaments, possessions confer human status. That is, a person should own things. If the child is old enough to understand possession it assumes charge, more or less, otherwise its possessions are administered by its mother. I have negotiated, for example, the purchase of chickens owned by children. In one instance a mother prevailed upon her little boy to sell me a chicken. After the sale was made, however, the child wailed miserably so that I felt obliged to make him a gift of it. His mother kept the purchase price and announced that she owed the child the value of the chicken. When the child does not understand the transaction, its mother announces publicly the facts of ownership and her intentions to make restitution.

The attitude of the Cubeo toward personal possessions is best described as casual. They are not indifferent to objects but they regard strongly proprietary feelings as improper. Their attitude toward ownership is governed by the important status principle that giving is honorific. Among sibmates objects circulate freely, the closer the tie between people the more active the exchanges. Sisters exchange ornaments and trinkets and men borrow freely from one another with or without permission. They seem to be most free with objects of economic utility, such as a canoe, weapons, implements, and somewhat

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421 more possessive with objects of personal adornment. While the former objects circulate most freely within the sib, the latter tend to circulate more among blood siblings. Consonant with this attitude of casualness is an almost total lack of anxiety about loss of property. An improperly secured canoe drifts away and the owner makes no immediate effort to retrieve it. It will come to rest somewhere downstream, he reasons, where a sib or phratry mate will secure it or even bring it back. Children have access to cherished possessions of their parents and when there is damage or loss it is considered improper to scold. The young son of the *Bahúkiwa* headman asked for a prized clasp knife. The father, reluctantly to be sure, gave the child the knife. The next day the child had lost it in the river and the father accepted his loss without comment.

421 On one occasion a visitor from an upriver sib rose to leave, after having spent most of the day in amiable talk, and in a most casual voice said, "I will take my spear with me." A young man then went to his quarters and fetched the spear, which the visitor took as he departed. The young man explained that he had been at this man's house during a drinking party. He saw the spear and admired it and took it home without saying anything about it. Theft to the Cubeo is not a matter of purloining an object. It is entirely a matter of attitude. They ask, in a manner of speaking: Is the taking of an object an act of friendship or of hostility?

INHERITANCE

241
423 Land, as already mentioned, is not an important issue in inheritance, mainly because the question of who has prepared a clearing for whom is too vital a matter for the Cubeo. A woman would find it unsettling to work land that a man not of the proper relationship had prepared. Daughters, of course, will work the land of a dead mother as they had worked with her when she was alive. Some personal objects are buried with the deceased; others, such as a woman's pots and a man's fishing gear, are destroyed. Some property, however, is inherited. Sons inherit from the father, daughters from the mother. Valuable and important objects go in inheritance, minor objects are destroyed, and symbolic objects are buried with the dead. The right to bequeath an object within the family is fully recognized. Ceremonial objects confer status and must go to the proper heir. I learned of no irregularities or disputes in the inheritance of ceremonial regalia. A man's gun and machete are valuable items and go to the son, but if the widow should remarry it is proper for the son to